(d) Value of exports of Processed Foods during the last 3 years are as under:—

Year	Value (Rs. in lakhs)
1982-83	25,094
1983-84	20,326
1984-85	26,500

Soda Ash

2750. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any study so far to see the purpose for which Soda Ash is generally used;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that there has been a steep rise in the price of this commodity making it difficult for the small scale traders to carry on their business; and

(d) what was the price of Soda Ash during the last three years, yearwise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) While no specific study has been conducted in this regard, uses of Soda Ash are well known.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Due to spurt in demand of Soda Ash, there were reports of increase in the price of Soda Ash in the domestic market. Government, therefore, allowed imports of Soda Ash under Open General Licence (OGL) at reduced rate of duty. As a result of this, Soda Ash is now available in the domestic market at a reasonable price.

As per available information, the prices of Soda Ash Light of different manufacturers, exclusive of Excise Duty & Sales Tax, as on 1.4.83, 1.4.84 and 1.4.85 ranged between Rs. 1880-2070/-; Rs. 2175-2245/-; Rs. 2324-2994/- per tonne.

Closure of Janupangara post office in Orissa

2706. SHRI GAYA CHAND BHUYAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that DERA Grampanchayat of Rajnagar Block in Cuttak District, Orissa has a population of 7,000 and having 20 villages and wards has only one branch post office since 1972 namely Janupangara post office and that there is no other post office within ten kilometres from this post office;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Superintendent of Post Offices, Cuttack North Circle has issued a notice to close this post office; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) No, Sir. According to the facts available to the Department, Dera Gram Panchayat covers 26 villages including 10 uninhabited villages and the total population according to the 1981 census is 5192. The branch post office at Junapangra was opened on 26.2.1974. There is a post office at a distance of 5 Kms. in Kurunti and another at Gopalpur (Rajnagar), a distance of 6.4 Kms.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The post office was opened on the basis of non-returnable contribution (NRC) offered by Dera Gram Panchayat. Arrears amounting to Rs. 18,845.64 are now due from the Gram Panchayat. A notice has been issued for the recovery of the amount and for closure of the post office in the even of default.

The general policy laid down in respect of post offices opened on NRC basis is that if the financial obligation undertaken by the sponsor is defaulted, the post office may be closed down. However, other relevant factors such as distance from the

nearest post office, population of the villages, the present cost and income of the post office etc. are also to be kept in view before the post office is actually ordered to be discontinued. This case will also be decided accordingly.

Malpractice in the production of drugs

2707. SHRI J. P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the drug manuacturing units in the private sector make two varieties of the same medicine, one for sale in the cities and the other for sale in the rural areas;

(b) whether it is also a fact that medicines which are sold in the rural areas are not of the same efficacy or are adulterated; and

(c) if so, what is the number of such cases that have come to the notice of Government during the last three years and hte names of the firms involved and the nature of punishment given in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) and (b) No such instances have come to the notice of this Ministry.

(c) Does not arise.

Damages to underground telephone cables

2708. SHRI O. J. JOSEPH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pelased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one of the main reasons for dislocation of telephone services in the cities is that rampant damage to underground cables by the public utility services;

(b) if so, whether Government have any scheme to demand compensation from these public utility services;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) whether the provisions of the Prevention of Damages to Public Property Ordniance 1984 could be utilised for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

(d) There is no such proposal as the damages are caused by development activities of various public utility services. However, coordination in road digging operation of various public utility services is being attempted.

Selling price of DMT

2709. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ICCI had ind cated in its report, that the selling price of M|s. Bombay Dyeing's DMT would be around Rs. 14,000|- per tonne;

(b) if so, what is its selling price now; and

(c) what are the reasons for which the earlier expectations regarding selling price had gone wrong?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) ICICI in its report stated that M|s. Bombay Dyeing and Manufacturing Co. Ltd. assumed the selling price of DMT as Rs. 13,500|- per tonne;

(b) and (c) M|s. Bombay Dyeing have reported that the current selling price of DMT is Rs. 21,500 per tonne and the increase is mainly due to increase that have taken place in the cost of raw materials, power, fuel etc.